

TOWN OF HARPSWELL
COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting of June 16, 2008

Minutes

Committee Members Present: Alan M. Shaver
C.V. Noyes
David I. Chipman

Town Staff Present: Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator
Melissa Swanson, Recording Secretary

The meeting opened at 3:05 PM at the Harpswell Town Office, 263 Mountain Road, Harpswell, Maine.

Various documents were distributed to those present:

- 1) Drafts of Letters prepared by the Communications Advisory Committee to the area fire departments and libraries, and a proposed article for the Town of Harpswell bulletin.
- 2) Draft of an "Agreement Between the Town of Harpswell, Maine and Harpswell Community Broadcasting Corporation", which had been approved by the Board of Selectmen on May 22, 2008.
- 3) Copy of a Memorandum from Katherine Chatterjee dated May 22, 2008 regarding the proposed Agreement dated May 17, 2008 between the Town of Harpswell and HCBC.

1. There was discussion regarding the visit of Mr. Somers from Comcast at the last Committee meeting on May 27, 2008, and the fact that he discouraged the Town from initiating discussion with other area communities served by Comcast.

The Committee agreed that a meeting with these other communities in the area would be beneficial, and should make the points: a) that the Town of Harpswell is in the process of negotiations with Comcast, and b) that it would be logical to explore "common areas" between Harpswell and other communities. Ms. Eiane volunteered to ask Brunswick to host such a meeting.

It was discussed that Comcast should offer all services (cable, internet and phone); if/when/as they provide such service anywhere in Maine. (In Maine, Comcast currently operates in parts of York County and the Midcoast region). "Ala carte" was discussed as an option that would be desirable.

There was a discussion of franchising requests and associated costs, i.e. the equipment in the media room at the Town Office would be passed on to subscribers and amortized. It

was also decided that the Town would need assistance in determining its equipment needs.

2. Information regarding the status of the Town's communications tower was discussed, and it was noted that Paul Strout would be doing the survey work himself, not AT&T as decided previously. This was due, partly, in order to go before the Planning Board in a timely manner.

Mr. Strout will be launching a balloon over several Harpswell locations in order to demonstrate the height of the communications tower. The tower is to be 365 ft., which is 165 ft. above the height of the mountain. The Agreement stated that Mr. Strout would erect the Tower and the Town's emergency equipment, and that the Town of Harpswell would be responsible for the maintenance of its emergency equipment. It is expected that the Tower will dramatically improve the area's emergency communications. Ms. Eiane said that Horizon was expected to provide equipment for the tower and the Town's communications equipment, and that she would bring a proposal regarding same to the next Communications Advisory Committee meeting.

3. It was discussed that the Town of Harpswell would contribute an annual amount of programming for Harpswell Community Broadcasting Corporation ("HCBC"), and that it would not only be for government programming. At this point, the memo from Katherine Chatterjee to the Board of Selectmen dated May 22, 2008 was discussed, as well as the Agreement between the Town of Harpswell and HCBC. It was noted that the Agreement had already been accepted by the Board of Selectmen, but some committee members asked that they be given more time to study the Agreement.

The Minutes of the May 27, 2008 meeting were accepted as printed.

Dates for a meeting in Brunswick with representatives from other communities were discussed. Ms. Eiane stated that she would recommend a tentative date of July 21, 2008 at either 6:30 or 7:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Swanson
Recording Secretary